

IN THE CLAIMS

(Claims 1-28 (cancelled))

1 Claim 29 (currently amended) In a restaurant, a system comprising:  
2 a waiter's terminal for inputting orders of food items ordered by a plurality of  
3 patrons at a table;  
4 a first program code for computing a total amount owed by the plurality of  
5 patrons for the ordered food items;  
6 a payment unit physically located at the table;  
7 transmission circuitry for transmitting the total amount from the waiter's  
8 terminal to the payment unit;  
9 a display screen on the payment unit for displaying the total amount to the  
10 plurality of patrons;  
11 a credit card reader on the payment unit for receiving first credit card  
12 information from a first credit card swiped through the credit card reader by a first  
13 one of the plurality of patrons;  
14 a numeric input pad on the payment unit for receiving a first portion entered  
15 by the first one of the plurality of patrons, wherein the first portion represents an  
16 amount of money to be paid by the first one of the plurality of patrons by a debit to an  
17 account of the first credit card;  
18 a second program code for automatically calculating a [[balanced]] balance  
19 owed on the total amount, wherein the [[balanced]] balance owed equals the total  
20 amount minus the first portion;  
21 a third program code for automatically determining if the [[balanced]] balance  
22 owed equals zero;  
23 a fourth program code for automatically displaying the [[balanced]] balance  
24 owed on the display screen;

25 the credit card reader receiving second credit card information from a second  
26 credit card swiped through the credit card reader by a second one of the plurality of  
27 patrons when the [[balanced]] balance owed is greater than zero;

28 the numeric input pad receiving a second portion entered by the second one of  
29 the plurality of patrons, wherein the second portion represents an amount of money to  
30 be paid by the second one of the plurality of patrons by a debit to an account of the  
31 second credit card;

32 a fifth program code for automatically calculating a [[balanced]] balance owed  
33 on the total amount, wherein the [[balanced]] balance owed equals the total amount  
34 minus the first and second portions;

35 a sixth program code for automatically determining if the [[balanced]] balance  
36 owed equals zero; and

37 a seventh program code for automatically displaying the [[balanced]] balance  
38 owed on the display screen.

1 Claim 30 (currently amended) The system as recited in claim 29, further comprising:  
2 circuitry for transmitting the credit card information and payment information  
3 received by the payment unit for processing when the [[balanced]] balance owed is  
4 equal to zero.

1 Claim 31 (original) The system as recited in claim 30, wherein the first program code  
2 for computing the total amount includes program code for computing an applicable  
3 tax amount to be added as part of the total amount owed by the plurality of patrons.

1 Claim 32 (original) The system as recited in claim 31, wherein the applicable tax  
2 amount is also displayed on the display screen of the payment unit at the table.

1 Claim 33 (original) The system as recited in claim 29, further comprising:  
2 a lamp of a first color illuminated on the payment unit indicating that the  
3 balance owed is not equal to zero.

1 Claim 34 (original) The system as recited in claim 33, further comprising:  
2 a lamp of a second color illuminated on the payment unit indicating that the  
3 balance owed is equal to zero.

1 Claim 35 (original) The system as recited in claim 29, further comprising:  
2 an eighth program code for computing a suggested gratuity to be paid by the  
3 plurality of patrons; and  
4 the display screen displaying the suggested gratuity.

1 Claim 36 (original) The system as recited in claim 35, wherein the suggested gratuity  
2 is computed as a function of a percentage of the total amount, and further comprising  
3 the display screen displaying the percentage with the displayed suggested gratuity.

1 Claim 37 (original) The system as recited in claim 29, further comprising:  
2 program code for displaying on the display screen a request for the plurality of  
3 patrons to add a gratuity to the total amount.

1 Claim 38 (original) The system as recited in claim 37, further comprising:  
2 the numeric input pad for receiving an input from one of the plurality of  
3 patrons to add the gratuity to the total amount.

1 Claim 39 (original) The system as recited in claim 29, wherein the display screen is a  
2 touch-sensitive screen that displays a list of the food items and their respective costs.

1 Claim 40 (original) The system as recited in claim 39, wherein the receiving of the  
2 first portion entered by the first one of the plurality of patrons into the payment unit is  
3 performed by recognizing one or more touches by the first one of the plurality of  
4 patrons of a selected one or more of the food items displayed on the touch-sensitive  
5 screen.

{Claims 41-54 (cancelled)}

1 Claim 55 (currently amended) A payment unit operable for permitting a plurality of  
2 patrons to pay a bill at a table comprising:

3 receiving circuitry for receiving from a waiter's terminal a total amount owed  
4 by the plurality of patrons for ordered food items;

5 a display screen on the payment unit for displaying the total amount to the  
6 plurality of patrons;

7 a credit card reader on the payment unit for receiving first credit card  
8 information from a first credit card swiped through the credit card reader by a first  
9 one of the plurality of patrons;

10 a numeric input pad on the payment unit for receiving a first portion entered  
11 by the first one of the plurality of patrons, wherein the first portion represents an  
12 amount of money to be paid by the first one of the plurality of patrons by a debit to an  
13 account of the first credit card;

14 a first program code for automatically calculating a [[balanced]] balance owed  
15 on the total amount, wherein the [[balanced]] balance owed equals the total amount  
16 minus the first portion;

17 a second program code for automatically determining if the [[balanced]]  
18 balance owed equals zero;

19 a third program code for automatically displaying the [[balanced]] balance  
20 owed on the display screen;


21 the credit card reader receiving second credit card information from a second  
22 credit card swiped through the credit card reader by a second one of the plurality of  
23 patrons when the [[balanced]] balance owed is greater than zero;

24 the numeric input pad receiving a second portion entered by the second one of  
25 the plurality of patrons, wherein the second portion represents an amount of money to  
26 be paid by the second one of the plurality of patrons by a debit to an account of the  
27 second credit card;

28 a fourth program code for automatically calculating a balance  
29 owed on the total amount, wherein the balance owed equals the total  
30 amount minus the first and second portions;

31 a fifth program code for automatically determining if the balance  
32 owed equals zero; and

33 a sixth program code for automatically displaying the balance  
34 owed on the display screen.



1 Claim 56 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 55, wherein the first  
2 program code for computing the total amount includes program code for computing  
3 an applicable tax amount to be added as part of the total amount owed by the plurality  
4 of patrons.

1 Claim 57 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 56, wherein the applicable  
2 tax amount is also displayed on the display screen of the payment unit at the table.

1 Claim 58 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 55, further comprising:  
2 a lamp of a first color illuminated on the payment unit indicating that the  
3 balance owed is not equal to zero.

1 Claim 59 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 58, further comprising:  
2 a lamp of a second color illuminated on the payment unit indicating that the  
3 balance owed is equal to zero.

1 Claim 60 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 55, further comprising:  
2 a seventh program code for displaying a suggested gratuity to be paid by the  
3 plurality of patrons.

1 Claim 61 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 60, wherein the suggested  
2 gratuity is computed as a function of a percentage of the total amount, and further

3 comprising the display screen displaying the percentage with the displayed suggested  
4 gratuity.

1 Claim 62 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 55, further comprising:  
2 program code for displaying on the display screen a request for the plurality of  
3 patrons to add a gratuity to the total amount.

1 Claim 63 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 62, further comprising:  
2 the numeric input pad for receiving an input from one of the plurality of  
3 patrons to add the gratuity to the total amount.

1 Claim 64 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 55, wherein the display  
2 screen is a touch-sensitive screen that displays a list of the food items and their  
3 respective costs.

1 Claim 65 (original) The payment unit as recited in claim 64, wherein the receiving of  
2 the first portion entered by the first one of the plurality of patrons into the payment  
3 unit is performed by recognizing one or more touches by the first one of the plurality  
4 of patrons of a selected one or more of the food items displayed on the  
5 touch-sensitive screen.

1 Claim 66 (new) The system as recited in claim 29, wherein the display screen  
2 displays a list of the food items.

1 Claim 67 (new) The system as recited in claim 66, wherein the receiving of the first  
2 portion entered by the first one of the plurality of patrons into the payment unit is  
3 performed by recognizing one or more selections, using a means for data entry, by the  
4 first one of the plurality of patrons of a selected one or more of the food items  
5 displayed on the display screen.

1 Claim 68 (new) The system as recited in claim 55, wherein the display screen  
2 displays a list of the food items.

1 Claim 69 (new) The system as recited in claim 68, wherein the receiving of the first  
2 portion entered by the first one of the plurality of patrons into the payment unit is  
3 performed by recognizing one or more selections, using a means for data entry, by the  
4 first one of the plurality of patrons of a selected one or more of the food items  
5 displayed on the display screen.

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